

## **Evaluation of Food Price Stabilization Policy on Consumer Purchasing Ability (Case Study of MMTC Medan Raya Market)**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study aims to evaluate the effect of food price control policies on people's purchasing power at Pasar Raya MMTC Medan. Traditional markets have a strategic role in the local economy as a center for basic needs transactions. However, fluctuations in food prices often create uncertainty that impacts people's purchasing power. This study uses a qualitative approach by collecting data through interviews with five sellers and five buyers in traditional markets. The results of the analysis show that food price control policies have a positive effect on price stability, which directly increases people's purchasing power. Sellers feel helped by stable prices, because it makes it easier to plan their businesses, although profit margins have decreased slightly. On the other hand, consumers enjoy more affordable food prices, although in some cases there is a decrease in product quality and uncertainty about the availability of goods. In addition, the findings of this study reveal that food price control policies are in line with Islamic economic principles that prioritize justice and social welfare. Overall, this policy shows quite good results in creating price stability and increasing consumer satisfaction. However, the effectiveness of the policy can be improved by improving implementation in the field and balancing the interests of consumers and business actors. The government is expected to continue to monitor and evaluate this policy, while considering input from various parties to improve the effectiveness of food price control in the future.

**Keywords:** Price Policy, Consumer Purchasing Power, Market, Price Stability.

## INTRODUCTION

Food is a basic human need that must be available in sufficient quantities, quality, safe for consumption, highly nutritious, and accessible to all levels of society. Food sufficiency plays a crucial role, not only to support daily life, but also to maintain the economic and social stability of a country (Sandi & Trisnawarman, 2024).

Food price spikes refer to conditions where the prices of food commodities experience a drastic increase in a relatively short period of time (AP & Hertati, 2023). Food supply instability and price fluctuations of basic commodities, including rice shortages, have the potential to trigger national unrest. To address this, the government has implemented various food price control policies, such as rice price management through Bulog, market operations for cooking oil, and imports to stabilize sugar and wheat flour prices. In addition, food diversification efforts are also a focus through Presidential Regulation Number 22 of 2009 and Minister of Agriculture Regulation Number 43 of 2009, which encourage increased food diversity based on local resources through collaboration between the central and regional governments. This policy not only aims to stabilize prices but also supports the acceleration of diverse food consumption.

In the context of economic development, the government seeks to improve the quality of life of the community through planning that involves optimal utilization of local potential. Economic development includes efforts to create stable changes in the economic conditions of a region, with the main goal of increasing the number and types of jobs for the local community. Support for regional development, especially in developing countries, is carried out by integrating research, utilization of local potential, and economic policies that aim to improve community welfare in a sustainable manner (Hasibuan & Harahap, 2022).

The main problem faced in the Indonesian economy, especially in the food sector, is price fluctuations that are often unstable. Food price instability can affect people's purchasing power, especially for basic goods that are very much needed by consumers. Traditional markets, such as Pasar Raya MMTC, are often the main place for people to obtain food needs, but unstable prices can cause difficulties for consumers, especially those with low incomes. The government, in this case, implements a food price stabilization policy to reduce price volatility and maintain people's purchasing power. However, the extent to which this policy is effective in increasing consumers' purchasing power in traditional markets, especially Pasar Raya MMTC, is still a question that needs further analysis. Evaluation of the food price stabilization policy is important to determine the extent to which the policy has a positive impact on consumers' purchasing power in traditional markets. Pasar Raya MMTC, as one of the big markets in Medan, is a place that represents the dynamics of the local economy, where consumers from various economic backgrounds make transactions every day. This study aims to identify the effect of the food price stabilization policy on consumers' purchasing power in the market. Whether the implemented policies have succeeded in stabilizing prices and increasing consumer purchasing power, or whether there are negative impacts that must be addressed further. The results of this evaluation are expected to provide recommendations for more appropriate policy improvements in maintaining food price stability in traditional markets.

**Table 1**  
**Per Capita Expenditure on Food and Non-Food in Urban and Rural Areas**

Years	Food	Not Food	Amount
2019	Rp 715.223,00	Rp 844.721,00	Rp 1.559.944,00
2020	Rp 755.191,48	Rp 876.407,50	Rp 1.631.598,98
2021	Rp 734.085,80	Rp 1.054.070,19	Rp 1.788.155,99
2022	Rp 803.088,03	Rp 1.047.977,07	Rp 1.851.065,10

source: BPS Medan city

The table shows the development of monthly per capita expenditure on food, non-food, and total in urban and rural areas from 2019 to 2022. Expenditure on food increased from IDR

715,223.00 in 2019 to IDR 803,088.03 in 2022, with a significant increase in 2022 compared to 2021. Expenditure on non-food also showed a steady increase every year, with the largest spike in 2021 when it reached IDR 1,054,070.19 compared to the previous year. Overall, total expenditure continued to increase from IDR 1,559,944.00 in 2019 to IDR 1,851,065.10 in 2022, reflecting an increase in purchasing power or changes in people's consumption patterns during the period.

The market is one of the fundamental economic activities, functioning as a natural mechanism for the exchange of goods and services. This activity has been going on since the beginning of human civilization. From an Islamic perspective, the market has an important position in the economy because it is the main place where buying and selling activities take place. However, the market also faces various challenges, especially those related to food demand and consumption. Fluctuations in commodity prices, limited availability of food, and changes in people's income and tastes are the main problems that affect market stability. For this reason, a study of household consumption behavior is important in supporting efforts to realize national food security. Demand for a commodity is theoretically influenced by factors such as the price of the commodity itself, the price of other related commodities, income levels, and people's tastes (Alfianti et al., 2024).

In a more in-depth analysis, as explained by Koutsonyianis in the research of Djaimi Bakcer, Heriyanto, and Elinur (2012), demand is a function that is influenced by many variables (multivariate). The main factors that influence demand include the price of the goods concerned, the price of other goods, income, and tastes. Therefore, understanding the dynamics of this demand is key to creating an effective strategy to maintain market stability and sustainable food security (Nugraha et al., 2024).

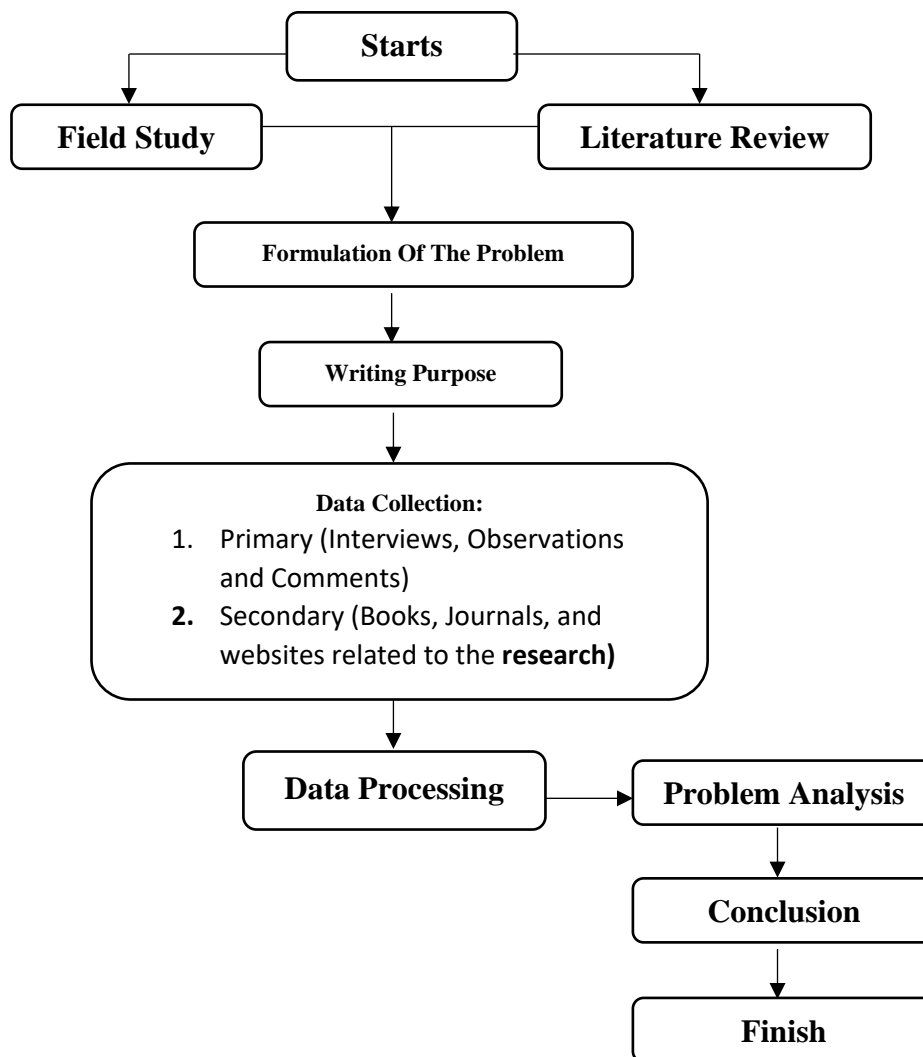
The government has an active and significant role in encouraging economic growth in society while supporting national life. To achieve economic progress, proper supervision and regulation are needed. Therefore, the policies taken must be based on careful consideration, considering that the impact can be felt by all levels of society, both consumers and producers. One of the strategic steps taken is through taxation policy. The government applies varying tax rates depending on the type of goods. For example, increasing tax rates on imported goods aims to protect domestic producers, while encouraging consumers to buy local products that are more affordable (Tri Murni et al., 2024). In addition, price control policies are also implemented to provide protection to producers and consumers, as well as suppress the rate of inflation. This step is realized through the provision of subsidies to companies that produce basic necessities and start-up companies. This subsidy helps lower production costs so that they can compete with imported products in the domestic market (Rawung et al., 2024).

Research related to "The Impact of Price Increases on the Community Economy" has become a relevant focus of study to understand the effect of price increases on people's purchasing power. One of the previous studies used as a reference is the work of Sunardi, Roby Ikfilana, and Ach. Imam Ali Bustomi in 2022. The results of their research show that price increases have a significant impact on the economic conditions of the community. In response, the government has launched various programs, such as farmer empowerment and entrepreneurship development, which aim to increase people's purchasing power. These programs have received a positive response from the community because they are considered socially based and able to support economic stability. In the future, the government plans to evaluate these programs to ensure their sustainability and increase their impact on community welfare (Sunardi et al., 2022)

Based on these problems, this study focuses on policies implemented by the government to overcome the spike in food prices. This study also aims to test whether the policy can create economic stability and encourage increased purchasing power. The main objective of this study is to analyze the impact of price control policies on purchasing power in Pasar Raya MMTC Medan.

## Framework of thinking

**Figure 1**  
**Framework of thinking**



The framework in the figure explains the systematic stages in the research process to evaluate food price stabilization policies. The process begins with field studies and literature reviews that provide theoretical and empirical foundations for the research. Furthermore, the formulation of the problem and research objectives are designed to provide a clear direction. Data are collected through primary sources such as interviews and observations, as well as secondary sources such as books, journals, and relevant websites. The data processing stage is carried out to organize the information into a more structured form, followed by problem analysis to find the relationship between price stabilization policies and consumer spending power. Finally, the research produces conclusions that provide a comprehensive evaluation and practical implications of the policy.

### **Hypothesis**

Food Price Stabilization Policy Has Impact on Consumers' Shopping Ability at MMTC Medan Raya Market.

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This study examines in depth the relationship between respondents and authors related to the impacts experienced. The approach used in this study is a qualitative method. Data were collected through interviews with economic actors in traditional markets, involving 5 sellers and

5 buyers at the MMTC Medan Raya Market located in Kenangan Baru, Percut Sei Tuan District, Deli Serdang Regency, North Sumatra. The data analysis process in this study involved a data reduction stage that was carried out continuously throughout the research in the field. The data reduction stages include compiling summaries, coding, identifying themes, forming categories, and writing memos. The data is then presented in the form of a series of logical and systematic sentences to facilitate understanding. Finally, the collected data is verified to draw the right conclusions (Yenni Samri Juliati Nasution, Rahmi Syahriza, 2020).

### **Sample**

The sample used in this study was 5 traders and 5 buyers at the MMTC Medan Raya Market.

### **Data Collection**

The data collection method in this study involved primary and secondary data to obtain a comprehensive picture of the evaluation of food price stabilization policies on consumer spending power at Pasar Raya MMTC Medan. Primary data were collected through in-depth interviews with five traders and five buyers, which aimed to understand the impact of price stabilization policies on trading activities, stock changes, demand dynamics, and price accessibility for consumers. In addition, direct observations were conducted to record market conditions, interactions between traders and buyers, and commodity price fluctuations. Meanwhile, secondary data were obtained from various sources such as books, scientific journals, and related articles that discuss food price stabilization and its impact on people's purchasing power. This combination of primary and secondary data was processed and analyzed to evaluate the effectiveness of the policy in creating price stability and its implications for consumer and market player welfare.

### **Data Analysis Techniques**

The data collected in this study were analyzed using a qualitative descriptive approach to understand the effectiveness of food price stabilization policies on consumer spending power at Pasar Raya MMTC Medan. Primary data from interviews with traders and buyers were analyzed thematically to identify key patterns, such as price changes, market responses to policies, and consumer perceptions of their purchasing power. Field observations were used to support the interview results by recording factual conditions in the market, such as price fluctuations and buying and selling interactions.

Meanwhile, secondary data obtained from books, journals, and articles were analyzed comparatively to provide a theoretical framework and compare the research results with previous findings. The analysis was carried out by grouping data based on relevant categories, then interpreting the results to answer the research objectives. With this approach, the study is expected to be able to provide an in-depth evaluation of food price stabilization policies and their impact on consumer spending power.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **A. Implementation of Price Control Policy**

In dealing with price increases, especially for basic necessities, the role of the government is crucial. The government needs to act quickly and work hard to address this issue for the welfare of the people and the stability of the country. To that end, the government must be able to identify the root causes of price increases and immediately find the right solution. The policies taken must be fair and not harm either party, either consumers or producers. Various policies can be implemented, such as policies related to tariffs, taxes, subsidies, supply and demand management, and price regulation, all of which aim to stabilize the market and maintain people's purchasing power (Salmiati, 2019).

The government's food price control policy aims to create price stability in the market, but its impact is felt differently by business actors and consumers. Based on interviews with various

respondents, it is clear that this policy has positive and negative impacts that affect aspects of their daily lives, both in terms of business planning and people's purchasing power.

Traders such as Mr. Agus (a vegetable seller) and Mrs. Rini (a chicken seller) feel that the price control policy helps maintain price stability, which makes it easier for them to plan sales. Mr. Agus said that stable prices benefit consumers and increase sales volume, although the profit margin obtained has decreased. In line with that, Mrs. Rini stated that the price of chicken meat is more stable, but still experiences a decrease in profit margins due to the government-controlled selling price. This shows that although price stability provides benefits in terms of attracting customers, traders still face major challenges in maintaining profit margins.

Meanwhile, similar impacts were also felt by Mr. Joko (a fruit seller) and Mr. Anto (a fish seller), although they face other obstacles. Mr. Joko noted that stable prices can attract more consumers, but profit margins remain depressed. Likewise, Mr. Anto stated that although fish prices were more stable, operational costs remained high. Although the price control policy helped with stock management and sales planning, both showed that the challenge of managing profit margins remained a significant problem.

On the other hand, Mrs. Ani (a fast food seller) also experienced a similar impact, where the stability of raw material prices allowed for more structured menu planning and selling prices. However, like other traders, profit margins continued to decline, so Mrs. Ani had to innovate in designing a more cost-efficient menu. This shows that although this policy benefits consumers, culinary sellers must adjust their strategies to maintain profitability.

For consumers such as Siti Marni and Budi Santoso, this policy provided benefits in the form of lower food prices which helped reduce the burden of their household expenses. However, they also observed a decline in product quality and instability in the availability of goods. Siti Marni felt that price controls helped reduce the burden, although the impact was not significant enough to completely overcome the challenges of household expenses. Budi Santoso, who is also a farmer, hopes that this policy can also pay attention to the welfare of farmers, so that it not only benefits consumers but also supports farmers' incomes.

Overall, the food price control policy has shown progress in creating price stability and increasing consumer satisfaction. However, to increase its effectiveness, the government needs to pay more attention to the implementation of the policy in the field and maintain a balance between the interests of consumers and business actors. The government is expected to continue to monitor and evaluate this policy and consider input from various parties to achieve more optimal results in controlling food prices.

To address rising food prices, several strategic steps can be implemented according to Lestari and Winarto's (2023) view. These steps cover various aspects from production to distribution, with the main goal of creating price stability that supports people's welfare (Lestari & Winarto, 2023).

1. **Balancing Production with Needs**  
The government, both at the central and regional levels, must pay serious attention to increasing food production. This effort requires careful planning to ensure food availability according to people's needs, so that there is no shortage that triggers price spikes.
2. **Development of the Agricultural Sector**  
The approach to developing the agricultural sector should be carried out through an agribusiness strategy, which not only focuses on production but also provides added value to agricultural products. Thus, agricultural products have higher competitiveness in the market, both in terms of quality and selling price.
3. **Market Operations**  
In conditions of continuously fluctuating prices, market mechanisms cannot always be fully relied on. The government needs to intervene through price control. Market operations are an

effective solution to stabilize prices in uncertain and recurring situations. Thus, the price of basic necessities can be more controlled and affordable for the community.

#### 4. Decrease in Commodity Prices

Domestic prices are often higher than import prices due to low efficiency in the production and distribution process. To overcome this, government control of stock is an important step. This policy aims to stabilize supply and encourage price reductions, so that the community can obtain basic necessities at more affordable prices.

These steps require cross-sector coordination and continuous evaluation in order to achieve the desired goals, namely price stability and improving the welfare of the community as a whole.

### **B. Impact of Price Control Policy on Purchasing Power**

Indonesia, which is known as an agricultural country with abundant natural resources, does not automatically ensure that its people have easy access to food needs (Salasa, 2021). The government's food price control policy has drawn mixed responses from economic actors, reflecting different impacts on people's purchasing power and the sustainability of their businesses. Mr. Agus, a vegetable seller with more than a decade of experience, sees this policy as a positive step because it can help consumers obtain more affordable vegetable prices. According to him, this impact is very pronounced among the lower middle class who are usually vulnerable to price fluctuations. However, on the other hand, he has to face the challenge of decreasing profit margins. In order to continue to make adequate profits, Mr. Agus must increase sales volume. To achieve this, he uses several strategies, such as giving discounts to loyal customers and adjusting stock according to market needs. This strategy shows that small traders need high flexibility to adapt to the pricing policies that are implemented.

Mrs. Rini, a chicken meat seller, also feels the benefits of the price stability generated by this policy. With more predictable prices, consumers can easily prepare household budgets, which has a positive impact on their purchasing decisions. However, the challenges faced by Mrs. Rini are not much different from Mr. Agus, namely decreasing profit margins. To overcome this, Mrs. Rini developed marketing strategies, such as offering discount packages to attract customers, which also helped increase sales volume. In addition, she strengthened relationships with suppliers through intensive negotiations to obtain raw materials at more competitive prices. This challenge shows that although price stability benefits consumers, traders must continue to innovate to maintain the sustainability of their businesses.

Mr. Joko, a fruit seller, and Mr. Anto, a fish seller, also face similar situations. Price stability makes it easier for consumers to plan their shopping, which ultimately increases consumer confidence in the market. However, smaller profit margins are an additional burden. To overcome this, Mr. Joko intensified promotions and discounts to maintain sales volume. Mr. Anto, on the other hand, faces additional challenges related to fish price fluctuations that are often influenced by weather and sea catches. He must be more careful in managing stock and providing special promotions to attract customers, while maintaining good relationships with suppliers through more frequent price negotiations. This situation reflects the unique challenges faced by fresh commodity traders, especially those who depend on external factors such as weather.

Mrs. Ani, who works in the ready-to-eat food sector, feels a more complex impact from this policy. Stable raw material prices make it easier to plan menus and set selling prices, but declining profit margins remain an obstacle. To overcome this challenge, Ms. Ani relies on creativity in designing menus that remain attractive to customers with more efficient production costs. In addition, she hopes that the government can provide special subsidies for culinary raw materials in order to maintain product quality without having to increase selling prices. This shows that the culinary sector, although benefiting from price stability, faces special challenges related to managing costs and product quality. Overall, the food price control policy has a significant

impact on people's purchasing power and the sustainability of traders' businesses. With price stability, consumers, especially those from low-income groups, can meet their basic needs without excessive economic pressure. However, on the other hand, traders face major challenges in maintaining profit margins. In addition, the government needs to ensure that this policy does not cause market distortions or reduce incentives for producers to increase their production. Therefore, supervision, targeted subsidies, and continuous policy evaluation are very important steps to ensure a balance between benefits for consumers and the sustainability of traders' businesses. Thus, this policy can have a positive impact on the community's economy as a whole.

### **C. Public Expectations of Price Control Policies**

The government's food price control policies have had a broad impact on various aspects of people's economic life, including consumers and traders. This impact can be seen from the responses of sellers who show that the policy can be categorized into several main influences. Traders generally appreciate the government's steps in maintaining stable food prices, which are considered to be very helpful for consumers, especially in reducing price uncertainty. Mr. Agus, a vegetable seller, and Mrs. Rini, a chicken seller, stated that price stability makes consumers feel more comfortable shopping. A similar thing was expressed by Mr. Joko, a fruit seller, who felt that consumers found it easier to plan their shopping budgets. However, this price stability is often accompanied by the consequence of a smaller profit margin for traders.

The positive impact of this policy is clearly seen in the sales volume which tends to be stable or even increases slightly. This was felt by Mr. Agus, Mrs. Rini, and Mr. Joko, who observed that more affordable prices attract more consumers. This phenomenon shows that the food price control policy has succeeded in increasing people's purchasing power. However, for traders such as Mr. Anto, a fish seller, and Mrs. Ani, a fast food seller, increasing sales volume requires additional strategies. They must innovate in marketing strategies and adjust services to stay competitive amidst smaller profit margins.

However, the main challenge of this policy is the decline in profit margins. Traders such as Mr. Agus and Mrs. Rini said that in order to maintain income, they must sell in larger quantities. This challenge forces traders to develop creative ways to market their products, such as providing discounts, offering savings packages, or adjusting offers to suit consumer needs. On the other hand, traders must also ensure that stock remains available and of good quality, which often requires better logistics arrangements.

This policy also has a positive impact on stock management. With more stable prices, traders can plan purchases better and avoid shortages that often occur in conditions of uncontrolled prices. Respondents reported that there has been no panic buying or significant shortages of goods since this policy was implemented. This shows that the price control policy is not only beneficial for consumers, but also supports the operational efficiency of traders in the field (Harahap, 2024).

Expectations for this policy in the future are very high, both from traders and consumers. Traders hope for subsidies to help reduce the burden of operational costs, especially in the procurement of raw materials. More tangible government support is also expected to keep raw material prices affordable without sacrificing quality. On the other hand, consumers want tighter supervision of product quality, especially so that stable prices do not cause a decline in the quality of goods. These two perspectives show the importance of aligning policies with realities on the ground, so that the goals of economic stability and public welfare can be achieved optimally.

### **D. Evaluation of Food Price Stabilization Policy on Consumer Purchasing Power**

The National Food Agency has a strategic program that focuses on stabilizing food supply and prices to protect the income and purchasing power of farmers, fishermen, fish farmers, and small food business actors, while ensuring the affordability of staple foods for consumers. To achieve this goal, the strategies implemented include strengthening the national logistics system, stabilizing prices at the producer and consumer levels, expanding access to information related to food availability and prices, and strengthening inclusive food institutions, including the role of



BUMN/BUMD. This stabilization effort is a government obligation as mandated by Law No. 18 of 2012 concerning Food, which emphasizes the importance of stable prices of staple goods in order to maintain political stability, community conditions, and public psychology to avoid panic buying. In addition, controlling inflation by the monetary authority is also an important step in ensuring public welfare through appropriate economic policies (Awalunnisa et al., 2023).

The central government continues to monitor and evaluate areas receiving revitalization programs or the construction of new traditional markets to prevent any detrimental actions from either the market or the local government. In addition, the government must also pay attention to other factors that affect commodity price fluctuations, such as consumer demand levels and commodity stock availability (Ariestiyanti & Adrison, 2020).

The food price control policy is a strategic step taken by the government to maintain the stability of basic necessities prices, especially amidst market fluctuations. This policy aims primarily to protect people's purchasing power, especially low-income groups, while ensuring the sustainability of traders' businesses. Various policies that can be taken include subsidies, supply management, market operations, and fair price regulation. However, the implementation of this policy requires an in-depth analysis of the impacts that arise for all stakeholders.

One of the positive impacts of this policy is the ability of people to plan household budgets better. Price stability gives consumers confidence to buy basic necessities without worrying about sudden price increases. For traders like Mr. Agus, price stability also creates a more conducive market environment, although accompanied by the challenge of decreasing profit margins. Traders need to adopt strategies such as increasing sales volume, providing discounts, or adjusting stock according to market needs.

However, this policy also requires traders to be more creative in managing their businesses. For example, Mrs. Rini, a chicken meat seller, uses marketing strategies such as savings package promos to attract more customers. She also strengthens relationships with suppliers to obtain more competitive raw material prices. A similar approach was taken by Mr. Anto, a fish seller, who had to face the challenges of price fluctuations due to weather and seafood catches. These traders demonstrate the importance of flexibility and innovation in adapting to pricing policies.

In other sectors, such as fast food, this policy presents its own complexities. Mrs. Ani, for example, takes advantage of the stability of raw material prices to plan menus more efficiently. Even so, she still faces the challenge of decreasing profit margins and hopes that the government will provide special subsidies to support the culinary sector. This condition reflects that price stability policies need to be accompanied by additional support to maintain business sustainability in various economic sectors.

Although price control policies provide significant benefits to the community, their effectiveness depends on consistent implementation and strict supervision. Without adequate supervision, the risk of market distortion can occur, such as hoarding of goods by certain individuals or reduced incentives for producers to increase production. Therefore, periodic policy evaluation is an important step to ensure that the positive impact on consumers and traders is maintained.

Traders hope that this policy will be accompanied by the provision of more tangible subsidies, especially for operational costs and procurement of raw materials. Government support in the form of incentives is expected to reduce the burden on traders without sacrificing product quality. On the other hand, consumers also want tighter supervision of the quality of goods sold in the market. Synergy between the interests of traders and consumers is the key to the success of this policy in the long term.

Considering the various impacts that have been felt, strategic steps such as the development of an agribusiness-based agricultural sector, more integrated market operations, and government

control of stocks are priorities to strengthen this policy. Through a comprehensive approach and cross-sector coordination, the government can ensure that price control policies truly support the welfare of society as a whole.

## KESIMPULAN

The government's food price control policy provides significant benefits for consumers, especially in maintaining purchasing power and facilitating household budget planning. Stable prices for basic necessities provide a sense of security for low-income people who are vulnerable to price fluctuations. However, this policy presents challenges for small traders, such as decreasing profit margins that force them to adopt innovative strategies, such as providing discounts, offering savings packages, or strengthening relationships with suppliers. This shows the importance of traders' adaptation and flexibility to survive in a tightly regulated market situation. On the other hand, the implementation of this policy requires continuous monitoring and evaluation so that its impact is more evenly distributed. The government needs to ensure that the policy does not create market distortions or reduce incentives for producers to increase production. In addition, targeted subsidies, agricultural sector development, and market operation mechanisms must be optimized to maintain a balance between consumer needs and the sustainability of traders' businesses. With a comprehensive approach, the food price control policy can continue to support public welfare without sacrificing the economic sustainability of business actors.

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